



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2020

No. 223

Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Honorable DEB FISCHER, a Senator from the State of Nebraska.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, as the new year beckons, our souls rise to meet You, for You are the source of our strength and the hope of our lives. We put our lives in Your hands, trusting You with all our tomorrows.

Lord, You bless us with Your peace, even in the midst of life's storms.

Uphold our Senators. Give them hours that sustain rather than stress. Permit the rhythm of Your truth to free them from the bondage that debilitates. May they find strength in You as they give You their restlessness and doubts.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 31, 2020.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable DEB FISCHER, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. FISCHER thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

JUST AND UNIFYING SOLUTIONS TO INVIGORATE COMMUNITIES EVERYWHERE ACT OF 2020—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. McCONNELL. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 480, S. 3985.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 480, S. 3985, a bill to improve and reform policing practices, accountability and transparency.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday, the Senate was finally able to proceed to this year's National Defense Authorization Act. A few of our Democratic colleagues have pulled out all the stops to hold back this crucial bill, but last night, a big bipartisan majority of 80 Senators voted to proceed.

There should be nothing controversial about giving our brave men and

women in uniform the tools and training they need to stay safe. There should be nothing controversial about continuing the work of rebuilding and modernizing our capabilities. It should be a nonpartisan proposition that America should keep pace with Russia and China rather than slip behind.

We have enacted an annual NDAA for 59 straight years and counting. In the next few days, the easy way or the hard way, we are going to do our job once again. This body will fulfill our responsibility to the men and women who protect our country. The Senate will be here until we finish this bipartisan legislation.

Now, for several days, we heard some Senators say Congress must send more cash to high-earning households that haven't seen any income disruption during COVID-19. Our colleagues who purport to be the champions of vulnerable Americans now say that what struggling people really need is for Congress to stop focusing on targeted relief for them specifically and, instead, to send thousands of dollars to people who don't need the help.

Experts from across the political spectrum agree that our colleague from Vermont is dead wrong on this. Socialism for rich people is a terrible way to help the American families who are actually struggling. Let me say that again. Borrowing from our grandkids to do socialism for rich people is a terrible way to get help for families who actually need it.

Washington Democrats took President Trump's suggestion and skewed it so the checks would benefit even more high-earning households.

Imagine a family of five where the parents earn \$250,000 per year and have not seen any income loss this past year. Speaker PELOSI and Senator SANDERS want to send them \$5,000 from Uncle Sam. They make a quarter of a million dollars, nobody is out of work, but our so-called progressive friends say the household needs "survival

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S7985